



(U) 3 1/2 Months in Qatar: Supporting CENTCOM

FROM: [REDACTED]
IA Intern
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(U//FOUO) My tour with Central Command was probably my best experience at NSA, and perhaps the least expected as well. I volunteered to deploy to Central Command's Forward Headquarters at Camp As Saliyah, Qatar in early January 2003 with others from [CSG CENTCOM](#) in Tampa. I was one of only two civilian intelligence analysts who deployed to Qatar before OIF (Operation Iraqi Freedom) began.

(TS//SI//REL) Working in the High-Value Targets cell during my time in Qatar, our mission was to locate any of the leadership figures in the Iraqi regime. At any given time, the team consisted of two NSA/CSG analysts, one or two imagery analysts, and several all-source analysts from CENTCOM. Most of our work focused on Personal Communications Service (PCS) devices, Iraqi regime security communications, Inmarsat, and High-Powered Cordless Phones (HPCP). During the weeks leading up to 20 March, we were actively developing new targets on our own and in conjunction with analysts at NSAW. Developing targets in the field represented a unique and groundbreaking experience, and in several instances, new targets were independently generated. Previously unknown Iraqi regime personalities were uncovered, often based on the collocation of PCS and security communications devices. Nevertheless, we constantly liaised with our analytic counterparts at NSAW, and relied on their expertise to fine-tune our work in the field.

(U//FOUO) I first heard of the outbreak of war like everyone else - from the news... except my news was a bit less sophisticated. Around 5:00 AM on 20 March, while half-awake in my bunk bed, I tuned my short-wave radio to a faint Voice of America station in Egypt broadcasting the news of the first strike.

(TS//SI//REL) Once OIF began, SIGINT information played an extremely valuable role in tracking leadership figures. Time-Sensitive Targeting (or TSTs) were often announced in the HVT cell when tippers alerted us to priority PCS activity. In several instances, this SIGINT information - in combination with other intelligence - led to direct attacks on these targets. In other cases, HUMINT sources provided information to the HVT cell, and we would attempt to substantiate this information through the presence of SIGINT activity. Needless to say, the success of the HVT cell hinged on the fusion of all sources of intelligence.

(TS//SI//REL) The close collaboration between CSG CENTCOM and NSAW was demonstrated on 2 April when, after urgent analysis by GEOCELL, CSG CENTCOM, and MENA, a facility near the Iraqi Intelligence Service Headquarters was destroyed because of hostile communications emanating from its grounds. Analyst-to-analyst cooperation in this example proved to be decisive in quickly prosecuting this dangerous target.



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(U//FOUO) Tomorrow I'll talk a bit about life outside of work, the living conditions, and some of my adventures into Doha.

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